



AUSTRALASIAN INSTITUTE
OF MARINE SURVEYORS

Shipshape

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**Bulk carrier safety, efficiency
reshaped by new rules, tools**

YEAR'S END A TIME TO REFLECT

Beyond compliance: discovering the power of coaching during an audit

I DIDN'T expect to be inspired during a recent annual company audit – but that's exactly what happened.

Picture this. I'm seated across from the CEO, DPA, Technical Manager and a few other senior leaders. We're deep into the records, ticking boxes, reviewing compliance, doing what auditors do.

Then, the CEO leans forward and says something that shifts the tone entirely: "As you know, our Marine Division is part of the larger Mining Operations Group. It was started just a year ago but we're truly committed to building a high-quality team. We're doing our best."

He then handed me a stack of papers. Not financials. Not technical logs. But something far more telling – a follow-up report from a group coaching session the management team had recently undertaken.

And that's when things got interesting.

1. Coaching at the core: the GROW model in action

As I flipped through the pages, I saw the unmistakable framework of the GROW model – a powerful coaching tool used by leaders and coaches worldwide. It's simple but transformative. Let's look at how it works.

G – Goal: What do you want to achieve? This is where clarity begins. The team had outlined specific goals for the Marine Division – building operational excellence, fostering collaboration, and developing leadership depth.

R – Reality: Where are you now? This step is all about honest reflection. The report captured candid assessments of current challenges – limited experience in marine operations, evolving

team dynamics and the steep learning curve of a new division.

O – Options: What could you do? This is the creative phase. The team brainstormed strategies—from cross-training with mining experts to engaging external consultants and investing in leadership development.

W – Will: What will you do? This is where commitment meets action. Each leader had outlined specific steps they'd take, timelines, and accountability measures. It wasn't just talk – it was a roadmap.

2. Why this matters

In an industry often driven by hard metrics and operational KPIs, it was refreshing to see a leadership team investing in something softer – but arguably more powerful: mindset, alignment, and growth.

The Marine Division may be young but, with this kind of intentional leadership, it's sailing in the right direction.

3. Final thought

Audits usually reveal gaps. This one revealed growth.

To any leader reading this: coaching isn't just for individuals – it's a culture. And the GROW model? It's a compass worth using.

Have you ever undertaken a coaching session – either individually or as a team? What was your biggest takeaway? I'd love to hear your experience. Drop a comment and let's learn from each other.

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From Audit to Insight: A Surprising Coaching Lesson in Leadership

